COTTAGES AT £10 A-PIECE.

A WRITER in the Chelmsford paper has been shewing how agriculturists may provide cottages for his labourers, on their own land, at 10*l.* a-piece, by using *clay lumps*. We think with the editor of the paper in question that our labourers are entitled to a house something better than 10*l.* will rear; still the suggestion is not without use. The writer says,—"The best material for cottage building, both for health and comfort, is the dried clay lump; the plan of construction should be a cross, by which means the dwelling room may be lengthened at the expense of the scullery. The walls should be placed 8 feet apart, leaving two rooms 16 feet long by 8 wide; the dwelling room may then be 24 feet by 8, and the scullery 8 feet by 8. Any labourer can prepare the clay (which should have short straw well trodden in by a horse), and cast the lumps in a mould, 20 inches long by 10 wide and 7 deep, at 3*s.* 6*d.* per hundred. When thoroughly dry the lumps should be placed in the same material as they are made with, and raised on the walls about three courses a day; the cost of laying is 2*s.* per hundred. The walls being only 8 feet apart, the rafters for thatching may be made of slight poles nailed on another pole embedded on the wall; the window-frames are built in the walls, and the windows open on a pivot."

His estimate, very close cut, is as follows:—

Thirteen hundred lumps, at 3*s.* 6*d.*; ditto, laying at 2*s.* 6*d*.....	£3	18	0
Deal boards for five doors and seven windows, carpenter's work, &c., with glass for windows.....	2	10	0
Thatching (exclusive of straw, supposed to be on the farm)	1	10	0
Two bushels of lime.....	0	1	0
Small poles for rafters, &c.....	0	15	0
One hundred bricks for hearth	0	3	6
Piece of wood over fire-place	0	4	0
Plastering the walls and ceiling, &c.....	0	15	0
	£9	16	6

NOTES IN THE PROVINCES.

IN Ely Cathedral the introduction of stained glass windows is rapidly going on. The large north-east window under the lantern—"the especial glory of the church"—has just been fitted by Wailes, as far as the funds raised by the undergraduates of Cambridge would allow. The principal figures represent King Edward, who was educated at Ely, and his Queen. In addition to the five stained windows provided by the munificence of the Rev. E. B. Sparke, four others, it is said, are in hand, to be presented by the Dean of Ely and others.——The keeper of the Lincoln Cathedral 'shew' lately met with a salutary lesson while rudely turning out an individual caught in the sacrilegious act of coming up through the aisle without coming down with the dust. The gentleman so 'caught' and pertinaciously expelled, turned out to be 'a tartar' in the shape of the new sub-dean, on whom it is to be hoped that this incidental perspective of the *a posteriori* visage of Janus will produce an equally salutary impression, not to be obliterated by the 'amiable countenance' that may meet his eye in future visits to his venerable Alma Mater.——A 'Penitent Females' Home' is to be erected at Lincoln, from plans prepared by Mr. Pearson Bellamy, a local architect. Contracts, according to the *Lincolnshire Times*, are to be speedily called for.——A disputed point with respect to work performed at the Springfield Gaol above the estimate and contract has arisen between the county magistrates and Messrs. Curtis, who threaten equity proceedings. The work, it is said, though not provided for in the contract deed, was done by order of the county surveyor; but there appears to be, nevertheless, a desire on the part of both magistrates and surveyor to stand by 'the bond.'——The sum of 8,500*l.* has been ordered by the Essex county magistrates to be raised on loan, to pay for the site at Brentwood for the County Lunatic Asylum, and certain architects have been selected to furnish plans for a substantial building, without unnecessary ornament, to accommodate 200 males and 200 females, and capable of extension: plans to be sent in before 29th March, with estimates of all costs. The premiums to be awarded are 150*l.*, or the usual commission, for the best, 100*l.* for the second, and 50*l.* for the third.——In cleaning out and sinking the water-course called Stream Ditch, at Faringdon, Berks, an extensive workshop, belonging to a Mr. J. Fidel, and full of timber, deals, and tools, has been undermined and entirely destroyed.——The following estimates were sent in for the erection of the Corn Exchange at Stourbridge:—

Mr. Edward Smith	£465	10	0
,, Thomas Nash	430	0	0
,, William Smith.....	380	0	0
,, Thomas Ostins.....	303	0	0

The commissioners voted by a majority for "Mr. Smith's estimate"—so says our authority—but which Mr. Smith does not appear; though, from preceding remarks as to the engagement of Mr. Edward Smith to "have the building completed in six weeks from the commencement of operations," it rather appears that his is the chosen estimate.——Nearly the whole of the new Lunatic Asylum at Birmingham is roofed, except the central building. Plans and specifications for a supply of water are being obtained, and the boundary wall and other works contracted for are in rapid progress.——The old butter cross at Doncaster is being carefully taken down, to be re-erected elsewhere. The bell-turret came down with a crash while letting it through the roof with ropes.——The foundation-stone of a new 'British school' has been laid at Mexborough.——The warerooms of the Hull Glass Works lately took fire, and insured property valued at between 1,000*l.* and 2,000*l.* was destroyed.

OPENING OF THE NEW CONSOLIDATED COMMISSION OF SEWERS.

THE long-delayed commission, under the new Sewers Act, was issued on Saturday last; and the members chosen to carry its operations into effect, by her Majesty, met for the first time on Wednesday, at the office, Greek-street, Soho-square. The names of the commissioners we have already given. The following were present:—The Earl of Carlisle, Viscount Ebrington, M.P., Hon. Frederick Byng, Very Rev. Dr. Buckland, Dr. Southwood Smith, Mr. Joseph Hume, Mr. Edwin Chadwick, Mr. John Leslie, Mr. William J. Broderip, Mr. Robert Hutton, Mr. R. Lambert Jones, Mr. John Bullar, Mr. John Bidwell, Mr. Joseph Hodgson, Captain Robt. Kearsley Dawson, Mr. W. R. Grove, Mr. Thomas Banfield, Mr. Edward Lawes, Mr. Alexander Bain, Mr. Thomas Hawes, Mr. Cuthbert Johnson, Rev. W. Stone, Rev. Morgan Cowie, and Rev. Edward Murray.

The Earl of Carlisle having been called to the chair, the clerk formally opened the business by reading the Queen's commission by which they had been summoned, and the subjects given to them in charge for the benefit of the public.

The Earl of Carlisle then rose and spoke as follows:—I have much satisfaction in opening the new consolidated Metropolitan Commission of Sewers. It has indeed been a subject of regret to me that, in consequence of legal and technical hindrances, this has not taken place sooner. We ought only the more steadily to resolve, by increased diligence and exertion, to make up for any time that has been inevitably lost. It would be hardly becoming among ourselves that we should dwell upon the composition of the commission. I think any one who attentively scrutinizes it, will perceive that the selection has been guided by a wish to comprise, within a manageable number, persons qualified by special experience, by high acquirements, by successful exertions in the general cause of sanitary reform, and over whose unemployed leisure the Government might be presumed to have some fair claims. However, the best indication of the selection will be the character of the services performed, the work we turn out. Let us remember that we enter upon our labours at no ordinary time—under no common circumstances. If this metropolis has as yet been but lightly visited by the hateful cholera, we cannot be sure that its destructive energies may not be now bound by the strong chain of winter, and that it may not, when loosened by the mild breath of spring, sweep afresh upon us with a hundred-fold power. Much may be feared, much may be learned from what has taken place so near as the village—suburban, shall I call it—of Tooting; and the state of our workhouses and hospitals cannot be too watchfully examined. Viewed thus in connection with the dangers of the time, in connection with the public attention which has been given to the whole subject of sanitary progress, in connection with the enlightened exertions which are being made in a variety of quarters, the business and aims of the commission must assume a different and a higher character than belonged to any of its predecessors. You are aware that the legislature has recently constituted a Board of Health, whose labours the Government contemplate with unceasing anxiety, and I think it will be wise both in this commission and in that board, to establish an interchange and reciprocity of assistance and services with each other. For this reason I look upon it as very desirable that at least one of the superior officers should have a mutual communication with both bodies. Although the number of this commission, as compared with former bodies of the kind, is most materially reduced, I think it plain that much which requires minute detail, and constant superintendence, can only be efficiently performed by committees and sub-committees, and it will be one of the most essential foundations we can lay this day for our future operations, to effect some organisation of these committees. The very extent and variety of the acquirements, and reputations which are comprised in the list of the commission, must render inevitable occasional discrepancy of views and conflict of opinions. Let me earnestly, most earnestly enjoin upon all a spirit of candour and modesty, of allowance and forbearance for each other, of patient inquiry, and searching after truth, with a determination to find out the truth, and nothing but the truth. Let me recommend that we should combine a strict attention to the pecuniary interests of those for whom we act, with a fair and liberal consideration for the officers, and that above all we should bear in mind, that where there is so much matter controverted, unsettled, and still to be learned and established, our proceedings are bound to be cautious, tentative, gradual,—taking nothing for granted, and proving all as we go along. With these observations, which I feel that I owe some apology for having offered, I will only add one word of reference to the only source of wisdom and help, that He may guide our way and bless our work. (Loud and continued cheering.)

On the motion of Mr. Bullar, the rates made by the late commissions were re-enacted by the new commission.

On the motion of Lord Ebrington, it was agreed that the ordinary courts should be held on the first Thursday in every month, at ten in the morning.

The Earl of Carlisle said that before they met, it had been recommended that in consequence of Mr. Stable's advanced age, he should not be continued in office as clerk to the Commission, but that his case should be referred to a committee for consideration. This suggestion was agreed to. It was also ordered that Mr. Stable's accounts should be handed over to Mr. Hatton, who should take charge of them provisionally.

A recommendation from the General Purposes Committee was read, that in consequence of the greatly increased services of Mr. Hertslet, clerk, and Messrs. Roe and Phillips, surveyors, they receive an advance of salary of 250*l.* to Messrs. Hertslet and Roe, and 200*l.* to Mr. Phillips. In the case of Mr. Hertslet, it appeared that he has performed the duties of clerk to Westminster and Middlesex Commission, to Holborn and Finsbury, Tower Hamlets, Poplar and Blackwall, St. Katherine's, Surrey and Kent, and Greenwich Commissions, without any addition to the salary received as clerk to Westminster Commission alone.

Mr. Hume wished to know whether any report had been received recommending this advance of salaries?

The Earl of Carlisle replied in the affirmative, and the resolution was carried.

It was next proposed and carried that Mr. Roe be the consulting surveyor, at a salary of 400*l.* per annum, with liberty to retire at any time, on giving three months' notice, at 200*l.*, provided he takes no other salaried office.

It was agreed that the solicitors should deliver a retainer to Mr. John Henderson, as standing counsel to this commission.

That the offices in Greek-street, Hatton-garden, Bethnal-green, and Borough-road, be continued as the district offices of this commission.

That complaint books be kept at each office, in which every ratepayer having any complaint to make should enter the same.

In reference to the last resolution, Mr. Hume wished to know whether the books would be open to all persons, or only to ratepayers.

The Earl of Carlisle was of opinion that no objection would be offered to an inspection by the public generally.

Mr. Bullar said that the complaint books were open to every person making a complaint, so that they might see whether they had been attended to.

Adjourned to Tuesday next.

APPROPRIATION OF RAILWAY ARCHES.—We are glad to find that our suggested appropriation of railway arches as refuges for the poor, is likely to be carried into practice. benevolent individuals having been led by the remark to exert themselves to effect this.

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